

The Servant Queen and the King she serves

A Tribute for Her Majesty's 90th Birthday

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“The Servant Queen and the King she serves”, published by Bible Society, HOPE and The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity is a beautifully illustrated tribute for Her Majesty's 90th birthday, described by the Queen in Her own words, to portray the pivotal role of her faith and trust in Jesus Christ, in shaping her life's work, offering us an inspiring, multifaceted insight into a life well-lived for others.

Her Majesty is very grateful to God for His steadfast love and compassion, having witnessed His loving kindness and faithfulness throughout her long life and reign. The Queen relies deeply on her faith as a beacon of light to guide her safely through the storms of life, to bring her to a safe haven at last. Her Majesty's authentic, religious beliefs, consistency of character, constant sense of duty and selfless devotion to Christ ultimately shapes all she does. There is a unique quality about her, a calm, 'quietly held' authority, a peace and serenity that marks her out in a special way. The Queen's extraordinary contribution and exemplary life of service to country, commonwealth and global community makes her one of the most admired people in the world.

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In the Foreword to the book, as she embarks on the threshold of her 91st year, the Queen reflects on a poem quoted by her father, King George VI in his Christmas Day broadcast in 1939. "I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way.'" This poem by Minnie Louise Haskins was handed to King George VI by his 13-year-old daughter, Princess Elizabeth, thinking it might be useful, which it certainly was. The Queen's self-effacing modesty did not mention this fact in her Foreword to the book. All that mattered to her then and now is how the poem helped others, strengthening the faith and hearts of millions worldwide. In fact, this is exactly what she did herself. She put her hand into the hand of God and He has not let her down. It was a clarion call to the simple faith and trust in God that marks the Queen's own personal life and long reign, time-tested and proven worthy in every way.

The Queen always looks up to God and out to her people. As we ponder upon her unflinching sense of duty, selfless devotion to God and exemplary service to community, country and Commonwealth, we wonder what the unusual source of her inspiration, courage and strength is in times of joy and sorrow. The Queen herself answered this at Christmas in 2002. "I know just how much I rely on my faith to guide me through the good times and tough times. Each day is a new beginning. I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right; to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings, and to put my trust in God. I draw strength from the message of hope in the Christian gospel."

The abiding and enduring secret of the Queen's successful reign lies in the humility of her heart when she requested the people of the Commonwealth and Empire to pray for her in the first Christmas Broadcast in 1952, as she dedicated herself anew to their service at her Coronation.